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ABSTRACT

Several decisions have been made with regard to the general structure and direction of the planned update of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) Standards for Library Schools, 1976. The changes planned fall into two categories: structural and conceptual. Structural changes would reduce the number of categories of standards defined in the 1976 version, consolidating them into larger categories in line with the categories of the ALA (American Library Association) Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies, 1992. Conceptual changes would update outdated content in all categories of standards and incorporate standards and considerations from a broad spectrum of countries. (MES)

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Paper

Overview

Several decisions have been made with regard to the general structure and direction of the planned update of Standards for Library Schools, 1976.(1) The changes planned fall into two categories:

1. *Structural*: reduce the number of categories of standards defined in the 1976 version, consolidating them into larger categories in line with the categories in line with the categories of ALA's Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies, 1992.(2)

2. *Conceptual:*
   2.1 Update outdated content in all categories of standards.
   2.2 Incorporate standards and considerations from a broad spectrum of countries.

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Projected Structural Changes

The 1976 standards are divided into 18 categories:

- Locus
- Goals
- Objectives
- Designation and Status
- Organization
- Support
- Accommodation
- Library
- Academic Staff
- Non-Academic Staff
- Curriculum
- Continuing Education
- Admission of Students
- Completion Requirements
- Credential
- Governance
- Records
- Planning

According to Maxine K. Rochester, who reported to the 60th IFLA General Conference on the equivalency of qualifications in various Anglo-American countries,(3) a nineteenth category - Research - was added to the IFLA areas in 1978.

The ALA 1992 standards essentially cover all the above areas within only 6 larger categories:

- Mission, Goals, and Objectives
- Curriculum
- Faculty
- Students
- Administration and Financial Support
- Physical Resources

We propose, therefore, streamlining the standards categories as follows:

1976 IFLA Standards Categories	1999 Standards Update Categories
Locus, Goals, Objectives, Designation and Status	I. Mission, Goals, and Objectives
Curriculum, Continuing Education	II. Curriculum
Academic Staff, Non-Academic Staff, Research	III. Faculty
Admission of Students, Completion Requirements, Credential	IV. Students
Organization, Support, Governance, Records, Planning	V. Administration and Financial Support
Accommodation, Library	VI. Physical Resources and Facilities

Proposed Conceptual Changes

1. Updating content

Not all the categories of the 1976 standards require an equal amount of updating. For example,

the following categories state general principles which have not changed to a great deal since 1976 and which, therefore, require minimal updating:

- **Locus:** The School should be part of an institution which awards a university degree or equivalent credential; or it should be an independent institution itself, giving instruction at university level and awarding a credential equivalent to a university degree...
- **Goals:** This School should have goals and purposes which are clearly stated in a formal document...
- **Objectives:** The School should have specific objectives, derived from its goals, which are clearly stated in a formal document...
- **Designation and Status:** The designation (name) and status (organizational level) of the School should be comparable to that of other schools in the country and in the local situation which are engated in education of professional personnel...
- **Admission of Students:** Selection of students should be based on clearly stated criteria; these criteria should require high levels of intelligence and educational background and suitable personal characteristics...
- **Completion Requirements:** A clear statement of the requirements for completion of the educational program should appear in a formal document which is available to students and prospective students...
- **Credential:** Upon completion of requirements, students should be awarded a degree or certificate which is suitable for their level of study...
- **Organization:** The School should have a distinct position in the administrative organization plan of the institution...
- **Support:** The School should have a positive commitment of adequate financial support, with a definite annual budget related to the established objectives of the School...
- **Governance:** Decision-making should be based on clearly defined policy, and should allow staff participation...
- **Records:** The School should maintain documentation of its major activities...
- **Planning:** A clear but flexible design for future activity should be prepared, based upon the School's goals and objectives...

All of the above categories from the 1976 standards fall into three of the six expanded categories proposed for the updated standards:

I. **Mission, Goals, and Objectives**
IV **Students**
IV **Administration and Financial Support**

The remaining categories from the 1976 standards - **Curriculum, Continuing Education, Academic Staff, Non-Academic Staff, Research, Accommodation, Library** - comprise the categories of standards which either were described in greater detail in 1976 (e.g. **Curriculum**), resulting in definitions that have enough specifics in them to require significant updating in light of the enormous changes in our field in the more than 20 years since they were published, or simply define aspects of our profession that have changed so drastically that any definition more than 20 years old would inevitably be in need of revising. The **Library**, for example, has changed beyond recognition since the 1976 standards described it, and the **Academic Staff** has diversified far beyond the requirement that "all members should have professional experience as librarians or information scientists"(4) in this age when faculty from fields such as business, economics, communications and computer science routinely contribute to the multidisciplinary nature of our field and our faculties.

All of these categories from the 1976 standards which require more extensive revising fall into the proposed categories:

II **Curriculum**
III **Faculty**
VI **Physical Resources and Facilities**.

2. Incorporating standards/considerations from diverse countries

The 1976 standards state in section C. Philosophy and Main Points of the Standards:

These criteria have been designed for a universal function. For this reason, they concentrate on basic principles and essential conditions of operation which ought to be found in any library education program, in any country... The draft statement of these standards brought reactions from every part of the world. In examining these reactions, it was noted that points of disagreement between one national viewpoint and another national viewpoint simply underscored points of non-universality; consequently those points were modified for this final version.(5)

In the 22 years since the 1976 standards were published the Global Information Infrastructure has moved out of the realm of science fiction and at least partially into place. Distance education is commonplace, scholars on opposite sides of the world collaborate electronically without ever coming face to face, standards in computer protocols, database structure and metadata models - to name only a few areas - have moved out field closer to a common information language.

Therefore, in updating the 1976 standards, we would like to attempt to succeed in an area in which the relative isolation of one country from another made success in the early standards impossible. We would like to establish a set of **standards specific and detailed** enough to provide real guidelines for real schools and, at the same time, **general and universal** enough to be applicable in all countries. This can only be achieved by studying and incorporating standards gathered from a truly representative sample of schools of library and information science in IFLA countries.

This subcommittee is currently gathering information on the library and information education infrastructure in every country for which we can locate such information. While we have located to date a large number of articles on the general state and/or recent developments in LIS education in various countries, we have found very few published standards.

The workshop will summarise work that has taken place during 1999 and present a proposed draft of standards. The workshop will be very hands-on, allowing people from any country to have an input to the draft standards.

References

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2. "Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies, 1992". Available: http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oa/standard.htm [July 1998].

3. Rochester, Maxine, "Equivalency of Qualifications in Anglo/American Countries", in 60th IFLA General Conference - Conference Proceedings - August 21-27, 1994. Available: http://www.ifla.org/IV/IFLA60/60-rocm.htm.

4. "Standards for Library Schools, 1976", 216.

5. "Standards for Library Schools, 1976", 210.

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